Ontario

Ministry of
Community and
Social Services

John Sweeney
Minister

LOOKING AHEAD

Trends and Implications in the Social Environment

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Ontario

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It gives me great pleasure to present to you a copy of *Looking Ahead*, a review of selected trends compiled by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. This scan is one component of the ministry's strategic planning process. It attempts to put into perspective some of the emerging challenges and opportunities likely to have an impact on the social environment.

The document provides trends and implications for four key areas: the economy, demographics, cultural diversity, and the role of government and service delivery. Also highlighted are the areas of individual rights, technology and human resources.

The information contained in this report was gathered by many people including ministry staff and affiliated agencies. I hope that you will enjoy reading our assessment of what the future holds for us and will find it of use as together we plan and deliver social services.

Sincerely,

John Sweeney
Minister

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Foreword

This report represents the product of the ministry's most recent environmental scanning process. It is intended to reflect major areas of concern in the social environment and their possible implications for the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS). Its primary purpose is to cast a dynamic rather than static perspective on some major emerging challenges and opportunities that are likely to materialize in the near future or within the next few decades.

The report is divided into five sections: The Economy, Demographics, Cultural Diversity, Role of Government, and Other Selected Trends. Within each section the material is organized into a trends-implications format to give readers a basic framework for "scanning" the social environment.

The content of this document owes much to the contribution of MCSS program staff who were asked to submit their own readings of trends and implications. A series of focus groups, made up of staff from the field and from a variety of program areas, provided important input on major issues facing the ministry. Information was also gained from the many reviews being undertaken within the ministry and by outside groups.

A variety of written resource material was consulted, including an extensive statistical demographic profile of Ontario compiled by the Ministry of Treasury and Economics. While most of the statistical information presented is aggregated to the provincial level, comparable data are often available at the county and municipal levels. The bibliography to this document cites the major sources consulted, and the appendix lists some of Ontario's key social indicators and their performance during the past ten years.

Like *Selected Trends*, its predecessor document, *Looking Ahead* is meant to stimulate thought and discussion, and is part of a wider ministry strategic planning process focused on the future. It is selective in the choice of topics covered and the trends monitored. The future direction of some of these trends can be predicted with reasonable assurance, while others are more a matter of speculation. The implications cited are essentially "food for thought"; they are the very beginning of our quest to understand and mould the future.

Section I: The Economy

Social Spending and Economic Growth
The Changing Marketplace
Poverty

Profile:

Social Spending and Economic Growth

Over the past six years, Canada has had the highest economic growth rate of the Group of Seven industrialized nations. Canada's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has grown in real terms by an annual average of 4.2 per cent since 1982, almost a percentage point faster than the average of the countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Ontario's performance over this period has been even stronger than that in the rest of the country, with an annual average real output growth of 5.9 per cent in the 1983-87 period.

Social expenditures consume the major share of the Ontario budget: in 1988-89, health spending is estimated at almost $12.7 billion; community and social services, $4.3 billion; education, including post-secondary, about $7.4 billion, for a total of $24.4 billion, or close to two-thirds of total budgetary expenditures of $37.9 billion.

TRENDS

Higher interest rates, appreciation of the Canadian dollar, depleted savings, a declining rate of consumer spending (especially with regard to durable goods), a slowdown in export growth, and rising inflation all point to an economic slowdown. There are no signs, however, of severe economic disruption.

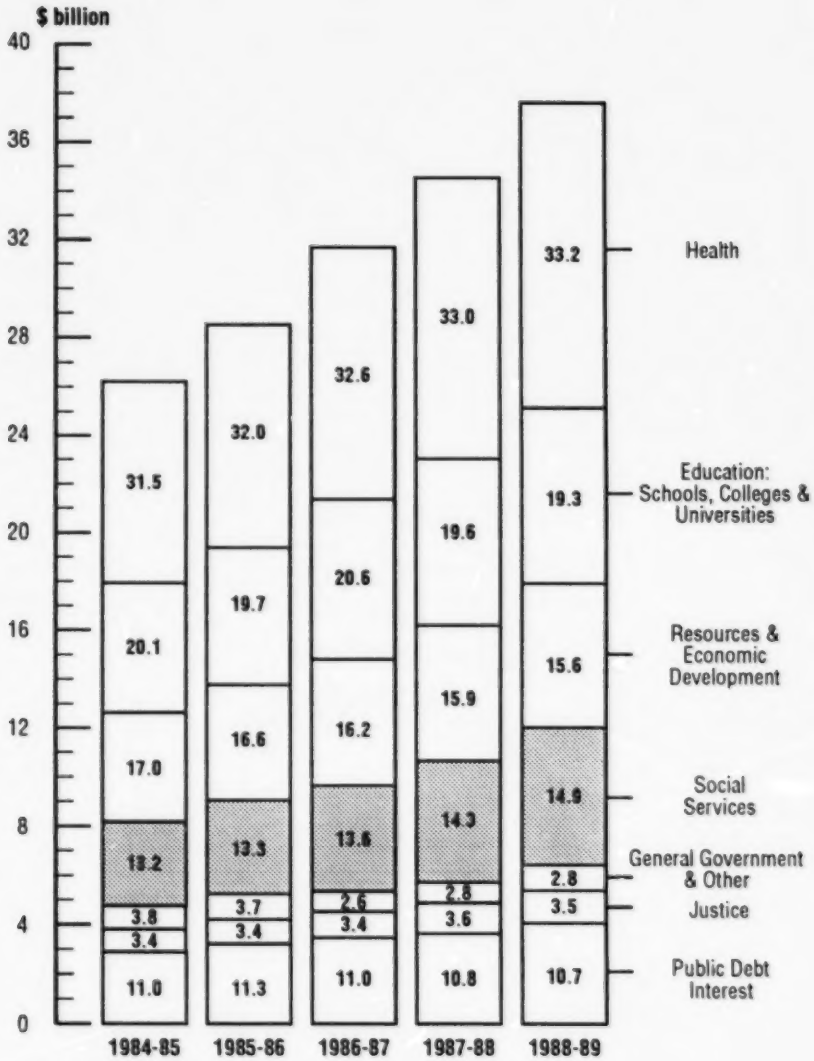
After six years of very strong economic growth, expansion is expected to level off in Ontario. Moderate but declining expansion and a relatively low and constant unemployment rate are forecast for Ontario for the next four years. Real economic growth should drop from an annual average of 4.5 per cent in 1988 to 3 per cent in 1989. In the 1990-92 period, real economic growth for Ontario is projected to decline still further, posting an average annual growth rate of around 2.7 per cent. The unemployment rate is expected to remain near 5 per cent over the 1988-92 period.

While moderate economic growth is projected for Ontario over the next few years, it will by no means be even. There will be large variations both in unemployment rates in different parts of the province and in the performance by different industrial sectors.

Regional economic differences in Canada are forecast to decline. Ontario will not have the same economic attraction to the rest of Canada that it has enjoyed during the last five to six years, resulting in a significant decline in net interprovincial migration until 1991, followed by a relatively constant level until 1996.

Since 1973, Canada has experienced a more significant shift in income distribution than the United States, but the general pattern is somewhat the same. In both Canada and the United States, the size of the middle-income group decreased. In Canada, the size of the low-income group decreased slightly, whereas in the United States the size of the lower class remained static. Interestingly, Canada experienced a greater increase in the size of the upper-income group than did the United States.

Figure 1
Ontario Budgetary Expenditure Functions: Per Cent of Total, 1984-85 to 1988-89



Note: Comparative figures are restated to conform with current government structure

Source: Ontario Budget, 1988

Public acceptance of government spending on social services as reflected in media reports would seem on balance to be relatively positive. An Environics poll in the spring of 1988 found that 58 per cent of respondents approved of the way the Ontario government is maintaining social services. Nonetheless, there is pressure to modify some components. A Decima poll in the same year, for instance, found that 82 per cent of Ontarians believe that those receiving welfare should be made to work as a requirement of assistance. In the fall of 1988, a Gallup poll found that a majority of people in Ontario favoured increasing family allowance and old age pensions, but making them more selective.

IMPLICATIONS

Moderate but sustainable growth and a relatively low jobless rate in Ontario imply that there will be no dramatic erosion of government revenues, at least not in the immediate future. However, Ontario's efforts to reduce the deficit and to curb public spending are expected to continue. This may make it difficult to increase funding for social services as well as for other government programs.

Economic growth is closely related to the relative income distribution of the population. If the rate of Canada's future economic growth averages 3 per cent or more, there is less probability of polarization in income distribution. Barring some unforeseen economic calamity, a continued improvement in overall income growth is expected in the next decade. A significant item on the social agenda will be to provide an equal opportunity for all sectors to share in this growth.

Public attitudes, as reflected by polls, seem to indicate that social programs in general are not likely to be under attack, though debate on "targeted" versus universal approaches is likely to continue. Reforms geared to supporting employment opportunities for those on social assistance, as recommended by the Social Assistance Review Committee (SARC), fit in with public expectations.

Profile:

The Changing Marketplace

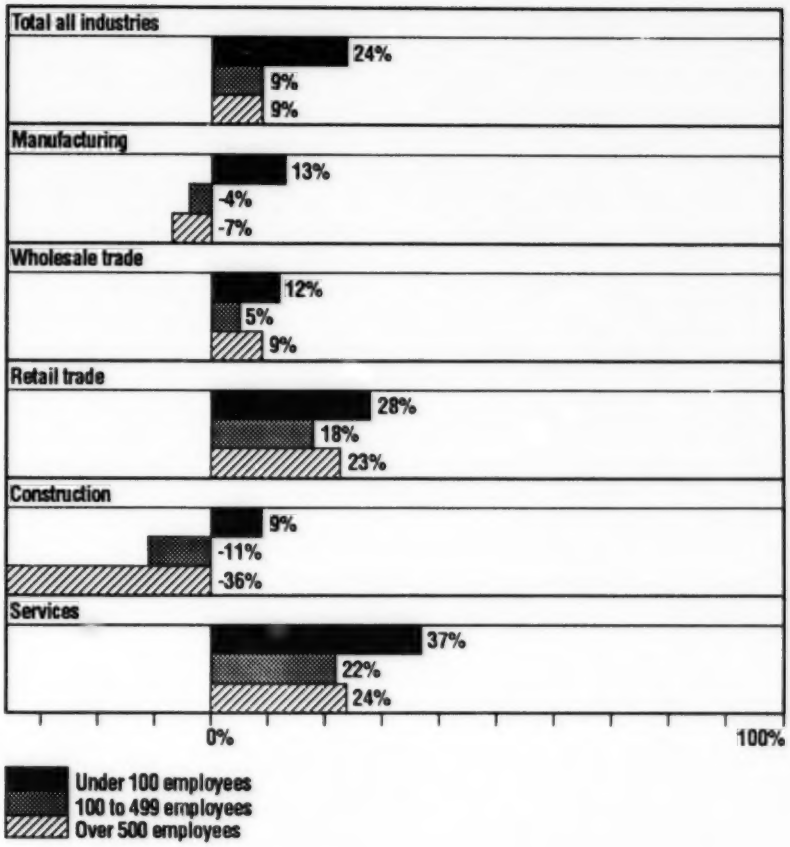
The emergence of the "post-industrial" society has changed the Ontario economy from one in which employment depended mainly on production of goods to one in which almost three-quarters of all jobs are found in the service sector. More Ontarians are now employed in hospitals than in automobile and auto-parts manufacturing, and more work in universities and colleges than in iron and steel mills.

In recent years there have been fundamental changes in the economy of Ontario, as in the rest of the world. These developments include the globalization of the economy, new and less restrictive trading arrangements under GATT, selective bilateral agreements such as the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, demographic shifts in the labour force, the introduction of new technologies, especially information technology.

TRENDS

Along with a shift from manufacturing to services has come a growing dominance of the small firm in the creation of new jobs. At present, 98.8 per cent of Canada's businesses have fewer than 100 employees, and 75 per cent have under five employees. In 1985, 287,000 of the 385,000 new jobs created in Canada were in firms employing fewer than 100 people. Most new jobs in Ontario are opened up by new entrepreneurs. At present, 30-50 per cent of job vacancies occur in firms that are under 10 years old, and, in the next few years, most jobs will be with firms that do not yet exist. New jobs will continue to open up in Ontario, though at a slower rate, with the service sector accounting for 80 per cent of all new jobs in the next decade.

Figure 2
Percentage Change of Employees in Selected Sectors, by Firm Size, Canada, 1978-85



Source: Statistics Canada

The annual growth rate in Ontario's labour force (which now numbers over 5 million) is expected to slow from 2.5 per cent per year in the period 1986-91 to about 1.5 per cent annually from 1991 to 1996. This slowing will occur in spite of the increasing number of women in the work force. As the population ages, almost 40 per cent of Ontario's labour force will be over 45 in 2011, as compared to less than 27 per cent in 1986. Consequently, there will be a dwindling supply of new young entrants into the labour market. In 1986, workers under the age of 25 represented 22 per cent of the labour force; by 2011, they are projected to account for only 17 per cent.

Structural adjustments in the economy are anticipated, as Ontario reacts to competitive forces from outside Canada's borders. One in four workers' jobs in Ontario depend directly on exports. Dislocation in the traditional manufacturing and resource industries may mean significant job losses in certain sectors of the economy and in particular regions of the province.

Northern Ontario, with its preponderance of one-industry towns, remains extremely vulnerable to global economic swings, particularly in forestry and mining. About 50 communities in the north rely on a single resource industry, and 30 of these communities have a population under 2,500. In contrast, the growth in both population and service sector jobs in the Greater Toronto area will likely be insulated from the effect of recessions.

New technologies are transforming the workplace, eliminating many low-skill jobs and creating high-tech jobs, particularly in the information services industry. Skills shortages are expected in a number of trades as job content is changed by technology. In a 1988 survey by Statistics Canada, shortage of skilled staff was cited as the primary problem by Canadian manufacturers. An increasing share of total employment will be in the managerial and professional categories. Between 1981 and 1987 these job categories increased by 700,000, or 73 per cent of Canada's net employment growth.

The pace and extent of economic change, particularly as it affects jobs, may be undermining general optimism about a continuing material improvement in our way of life. Social analysts point to a growing emphasis on family, friends, and community rather than on material acquisitions, and there may well be a causal relationship between these two trends.

IMPLICATIONS

The dramatic growth in small firms could well put increased pressure on public pension systems in future years. Small firms generally lack comprehensive employee benefit packages and pay lower wages.

Unemployment among youth is expected to decline in a seller's job market. However, unskilled young people will still have trouble finding a well-paying job or a job with long-term career potential. Employment programs may concentrate more on the unique problems of disadvantaged youth, as for many years unemployment has been highest among young people. Unemployment or underemployment among older workers will also be a key concern.

Traditionally, the economy has relied on graduates of the education system to bring new skills to the labour force. In the future, with fewer young people entering the work force from school, the demand for new job skills will fall on existing workers. These workers will need a variety of income, training, equipment, and transportation allowances to help them acquire new skills, perhaps more than once during their lives. Many of them will be women with children who will need family supports such as child care.

Employment opportunities may be more limited for unskilled, educationally disadvantaged workers in an economy moving towards knowledge-intensive goods and services. Unskilled workers may find jobs, but they may be low-paying jobs offering few opportunities for advancement. With an estimated one in seven adults in Ontario functionally illiterate (with less than grade eight level of reading), there is a substantial segment of the labour force for whom opportunities are severely limited. A multidisciplinary approach to the problems of unskilled workers will require close co-operation among education,

employment, and social services ministries. As the public understands more about the impact of the new "service" economy, however, and as the focus of economic programs shifts to retraining with an emphasis on the importance of human resources, there should be a growing appreciation of the role of social services in bolstering the economy.

In the immediate future, there may be greater pressure on older workers to retire early to make way for the bulge of middle-aged baby-boomers who are eager for advancement and opportunity in the labour force. Over the long term, however, the declining supply of new entrants to the labour force may create pressures on older workers to remain on the job past the age of 65 to compensate for labour shortages. Moreover, the decline in the supply of new entrants will put a higher proportion of the labour force in the peak earning years, between 40 and 49 years of age. As a result of this age increase, family income can be expected to rise.

The uneven impact of structural economic changes will require flexibility in the provision of services. Different responses from service providers will be needed in a northern lumber town, a rural farm community, or a large southern inner-city municipality. The agricultural industry has been identified as one which may suffer substantial losses from free trade with the United States.

Profile:

Poverty

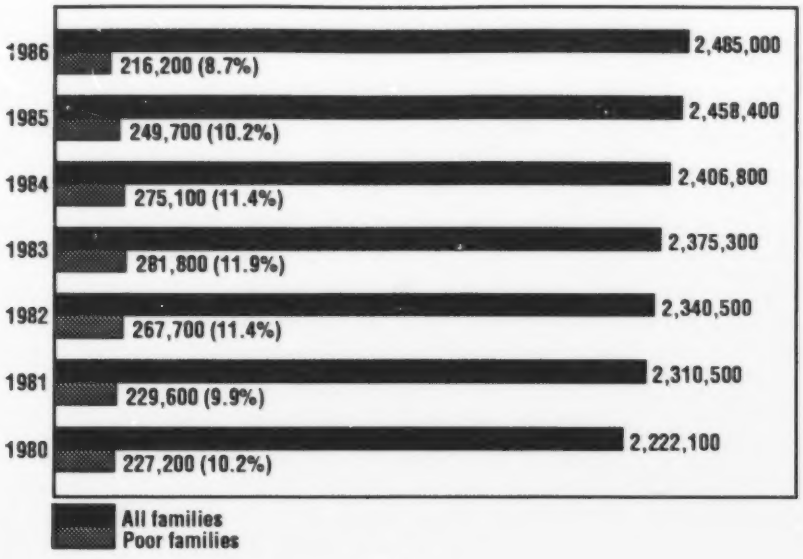
Ontario has the lowest poverty rate in Canada. In 1986, according to the National Council of Welfare, fewer than one in ten families and three in ten unattached individuals were living below the "poverty line" in Ontario. The council defines family as a group of individuals sharing a common dwelling unit and related by blood, marriage, or adoption, while an unattached person is one living alone or in a household where he or she is not related to other household members.

TRENDS

The poverty rate among unattached individuals in Ontario in 1986 was 28 per cent, and 8.7 per cent for families. The child poverty rate in Ontario was 13.4 per cent, compared to a Canadian average of 17.6 per cent. Poverty among families headed by sole-support mothers in Ontario remains very high (42 per cent), although it is lower than the Canadian average (48 per cent). Among unattached individuals, women are also more at risk of poverty than men.

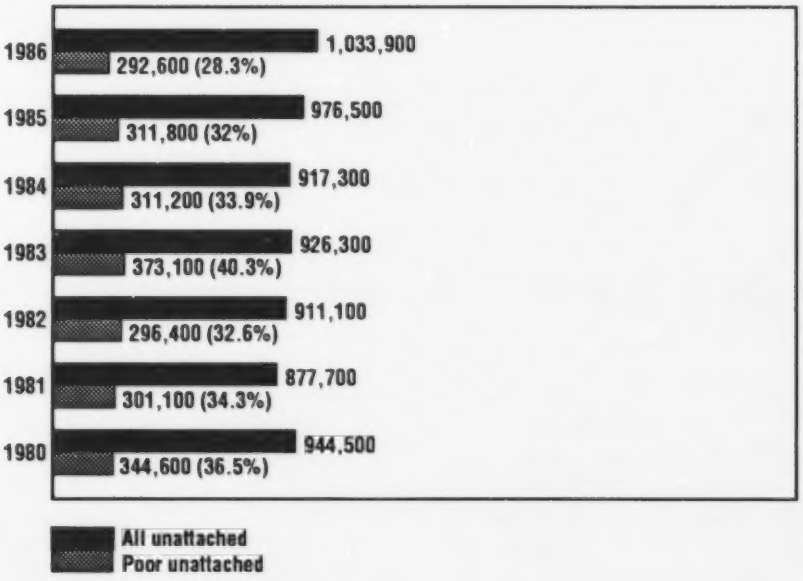
The majority (almost 60 per cent) of low-income families are working poor. They are headed by persons who work or are actively searching for a job. Where the family head works part-time, the family is five times more likely to be poor than a family led by a full-time earner.

Figure 3: Poverty Trends for Families in Ontario, 1980–86



Source: *Transitions*, Social Assistance Review Committee, 1988

Figure 4: Poverty Trends for Unattached Individuals in Ontario, 1980–86



Source: *Transitions*, Social Assistance Review Committee, 1988

Poverty trends have shown marked improvements in Canada over the last two decades. The poverty rate has declined by over 35 per cent since 1969, and the actual number of poor people has been cut by one-quarter. In Ontario, the poverty rate among families dropped by about 12 per cent between 1981 and 1986, and among unattached individuals by over 17.5 per cent. However, there are still almost a million men, women, and children in Ontario at poverty levels.

The falling poverty rate in recent years can be attributed mainly to the better financial position of the elderly. Less than 40 per cent of unattached individuals 65 and older in Ontario were poor in 1985, compared to about 50 per cent in 1980. Elderly families are doing better than unattached older citizens. The poverty rate for elderly families in Canada declined from 41 per cent in 1969 to 9.5 per cent in 1986.

The social assistance caseload (general welfare and family benefits) is continuing to increase, however, beyond what could be attributed to general growth in the population. Between 1981 and 1987 there was an increase of 42 per cent in welfare and family benefits, caused for the most part by increased numbers of single parents, refugees, and young recipients with limited education and few skills.

Homelessness is becoming a more pressing problem, particularly in large urban areas such as Metropolitan Toronto. Features of the housing crisis include long waiting lists for public housing, overcrowded hostels, very low vacancy rates for rental accommodation, and the steady and dramatic increase in house prices. For those on low incomes, this means an increased proportion of their income is spent on shelter, leaving less for food, clothing, and other needs.

IMPLICATIONS

Poverty can become a generational phenomenon; that is, children who grow up knowing only poverty may in turn form poor families of their own. Families who subsist outside the mainstream society are vulnerable to a whole range of related social problems, many of which require costly intervention.

While steady improvements have been made, the large number of children living in poverty will continue to create pressure on government to develop new approaches through its social assistance and tax programs.

The needs of the working poor must also be taken into account. Suggestions range from an increase in the minimum wage to the implementation of some form of guaranteed income. SARC proposed an income supplementation program to top up the financial resources of the working poor. The committee also emphasized the need for additional assistance to help people re-enter the labour market. It stressed that new approaches are required to meet the problem of the permanently unemployable if this group is to participate effectively in the mainstream of society.

The crisis in affordable housing calls for a co-ordinated effort among federal, provincial, and municipal governments and a variety of agencies who are involved with the homeless. Part of the problem is producing the right mix of housing for families, singles, and elderly people of varying incomes. Changes in family composition and lifestyle make it difficult to predict future housing demand.

Section II: Demographics

Regional Variations
Children
The Elderly Boom
Persons with Disabilities
Family Composition
Family Violence

Profile:

Regional Variations

Where people live has an impact on the demand for services. The bulk of Ontario's population congregates in the south and in cities, particularly large urban areas such as Metropolitan Toronto and Ottawa-Carleton.

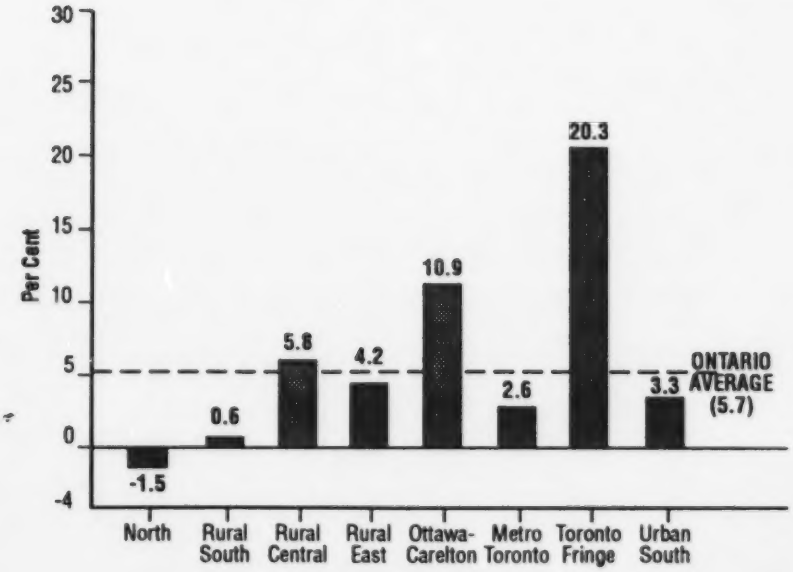
TRENDS

In 1961, the Greater Toronto area accounted for 34 per cent of the province's population; by 1986, 41 per cent of the population resided in this area. In 1986, of the 9.1 million people in the province, only 805,000 lived in northern Ontario. While areas such as York Region grew by almost 40 per cent in 1981-86, many parts of northern Ontario experienced a decline in population.

Throughout Ontario, the growth of urban areas at the expense of rural areas will occur mainly because of the migration of Ontarians themselves. This gravitation towards urban areas and away from rural areas will be the result of a variety of social and economic factors: the mobility of baby boomers in the 25-34 year range, the growing importance of university communities in stimulating job growth, and, most importantly, the growth of the service sector as the major employer.

By the year 2000, it is projected that about 5 million people will live in the Greater Toronto region, an increase of 1.3 million from 1986. The population gains in the Toronto region will come largely at the expense of smaller urban communities and rural areas of Ontario. Between 1981 and 1986 the dominant source of migrants to the Greater Toronto area was from other parts of Ontario, and a large percentage of those who moved to the city were in the 25-34 year old age category.

Figure 5
Regional Population Growth in Ontario, 1981-86



Source: Ministry of Treasury and Economics, 1988

Northern Ontario's population has some unique demographic characteristics, many of which are related to the high proportion of francophones and Indians in the area. More than half the Indian population resides in the north, making up 6 per cent of the region's total population. The north has a considerably younger population than other areas in Ontario, reflecting higher fertility especially among Indians and francophones. The lower life expectancy of Indians and men in high-risk occupations is also a contributing factor in the relatively low proportion of elderly. Another distinct characteristic of the north is the low participation of youth aged 15-24 years in the labour force.

Villages with a population between 1,000 and 2,500 have the highest concentration of elderly (14 per cent). In general, rural areas tend to have fewer single-parent families and more young two-parent households. The so-called non-family household made up of one person living alone has not touched rural areas to the same degree as in the cities. Early childbearing and part-time employment are also much more evident in rural areas. The rising fertility rate of women over 30 years of age is essentially an urban phenomenon.

Per capita incomes tend to be highest in urban areas. Government transfer payments, including pensions, social security, and tax credits, are highest in rural areas and in the north.

IMPLICATIONS

Regional variations in population growth, age, ethnic composition, and family structure will continue to require different responses from the social services system. In some cases, the challenges are also different – for example, in providing staff and services in remote communities in the far north; in overcoming isolation of an abused spouse or child in a rural area; and in locating emergency and long-term affordable housing for the poor in large cities.

For rural communities and much of northern Ontario, the decline in population through migration to the larger cities, particularly the migration of the working age population, will affect the kinds of services needed and perhaps the capacity of the community to provide them. Significant population shifts away from some municipalities could have a detrimental effect on the economic bases of those communities.

For larger urban areas, particularly the fringe area around Metropolitan Toronto, dramatic population growth rates will cause real pressures both to meet the demand for services and to co-ordinate their provision. In Toronto itself, fewer families will likely be living in the central core, where the population may be increasingly polarized between the well-off and the very poor.

Since many of the problems and service needs will vary and will be difficult to meet on the basis of current municipal boundaries, a trend may develop to plan and manage some service on a broader geographic basis. Overall, the social service system will need to be flexible in responding to the needs of different geographical areas, many of which have special demographic characteristics.

Profile:

Children

In 1988, there were an estimated 2,324,350 children under 18 years of age in Ontario, or about 25 per cent of the population. While the number of children will not peak until just after the year 2000, declining fertility rates mean that children will represent an increasingly smaller percentage of the total population of Ontario.

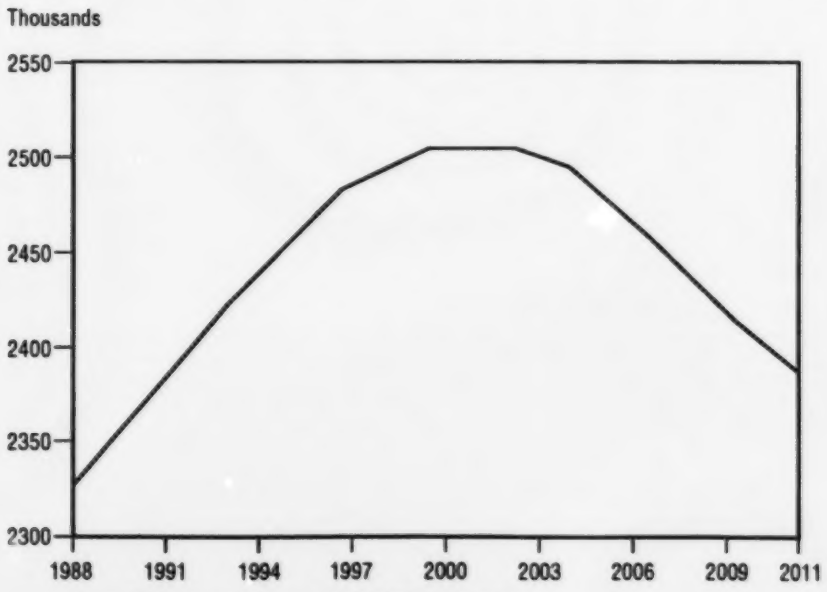
TRENDS

In 1961, at the height of the baby boom, Ontario's fertility rate was 3.8 (births per woman). By the early 1970s it had dropped below the replacement level of 2.1, and in 1986 it was 1.68. A low birth rate is characteristic of all the industrialized countries in the world. In response, the government of Quebec, like some European governments, is offering financial incentives to families to have more children, hoping thereby to maintain the population level without relying solely on outside immigration.

With a decrease in the fertility rates, many children find themselves with few or no siblings. Large families are becoming a thing of the past: the number of families with six or more persons is one-third what it was in 1971. However, the children of the 1980s are more likely than previous generations to learn socialization skills at an earlier age outside the home in child-care centres and junior kindergartens.

The child population (0-17) in Ontario is expected to increase slowly from the current level of 2,324,350 in 1988 and to peak at approximately 2.5 million by the year 2000. This increase is due, in large part, to the final surge of baby-boom couples who postponed children to pursue careers and now wish to become parents before the biological clock runs out.

Figure 6
Projected Total Child Population (0-17), in Ontario, 1988-2011

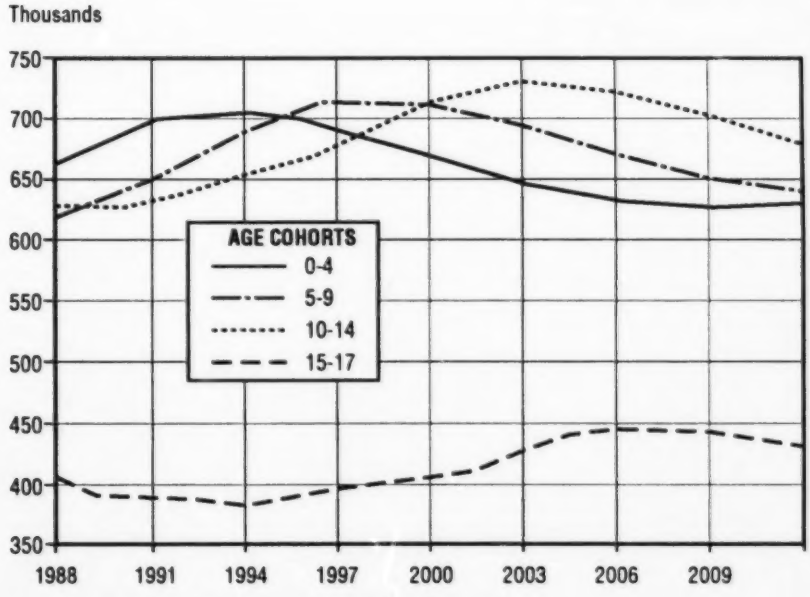


Source: Ministry of Treasury and Economics, *Projected Reference Population Scenario*, August 1988

After the year 2000, the child population is expected to remain relatively constant until the year 2004, and then to recede slowly to an estimated 2,389,800 children in the year 2011. Throughout the 1988-2011 period, the proportion of children in Ontario's population will consistently decline, from about 25 per cent in 1988 to about 20 per cent in 2011.

Various age groups within the overall 0-17 age group display unique patterns of population growth during the 1988-2011 period. The 0-4 age cohort, currently standing at about 662,500, is expected to increase to 705,000 by 1994, and then decline. The 5-9 age group, currently numbering about 627,500, is expected to increase to 716,800 by 1998, and then decline. The 10-14 age group is expected to increase from its current level of 626,000 to 731,000 by the year 2003, and then level off to 681,700 by 2011. The 15-17 age group will continue to decline from its current level of 408,300 to 389,000 in 1995. After 1995, this age group will begin to increase to 448,000 in the year 2007, and then decline, ending up at a projected 436,800 by the year 2011.

Figure 7
Projected Child Population, by Age Cohort, in Ontario, 1988-2011



Source: Ministry of Treasury and Economics, *Projected Reference Population Scenario*, August 1988

More children are living in single-parent families than in the past. Most single parents are separated or divorced, but births to single mothers have also increased, from just over 3 per cent of all births in Ontario in 1951 to about 11 per cent in 1986. The largest proportion of unmarried mothers are in their twenties and older. Births among adolescent women have declined markedly during the last ten years or so. In 1976, about 11 per cent of Ontario's female adolescents gave birth, as compared to about 6 per cent in 1986.

Fewer children are being taken into care by Children's Aid Societies than 20 years ago, but the number of children receiving protection and prevention services from these agencies has risen substantially. In recent years, both the provincial Child and Family Services Act (CFSA) and the federal Young Offenders Act (YOA) have favoured the least restrictive alternative in terms of care and a new emphasis on the rights of children in terms of the law. The CFSA also shifted planning and funding from an agency base to a service and program base. An expansion in community-based services has made it possible for more children with special needs, such as the developmentally handicapped, the physically disabled, and young offenders, to live with their families rather than in institutions.

IMPLICATIONS

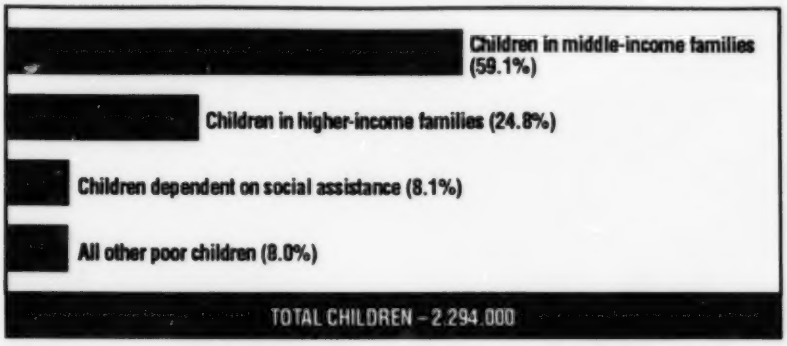
The current decline in the ratio of children to the general population and the long-term projected decrease in the number of children will have some impact on public expenditures. However, other stress-related trends such as family breakup and poverty could offset this decline by increasing the number of children and families requiring support.

One of the findings of the Ontario Child Health Study was that only a minority of children with psychiatric disorders are served by the specialized mental health and social service system. By contrast, family doctors and schools see a majority of children, including those with disorders. This suggests that the description of "need" for treatment and intervention services should be clarified, and that ministry-funded services must be better linked with those of other service-providers, such as schools, physicians, and voluntary or self-help organizations. Co-ordination with other ministries and service-providers will be required to identify groups of children at risk, to find ways of reducing that risk, and to ensure that children's needs are met.

Children with problems rarely have only one type of disorder. Developmental, social, emotional, behavioural, and/or cognitive problems tend to overlap and are influenced by a variety of factors in their environment. Service providers may increasingly focus on an integrated approach to treatment. There may also be some rethinking of the roles and approaches to children's services, as the ministry and service agencies aim at a more flexible, community-based service system, with closer ties to other disciplines. Demand for services will likely be highest in the larger urban areas, particularly for innovative short-term crisis services including those directed at runaway children. These services may involve co-operation among police, Children's Aid Societies, drug-abuse programs, and other community groups involved in outreach services.

The children of the poor will continue to be a key target group. Research should continue into the correlation between child poverty and other problems such as physical and emotional disorders. A greater understanding of the causes of childhood problems would allow a more directed approach to preventive services which could lessen the economic burden of late intervention as well as avoid the consequent social and emotional damage.

Figure 8
Ontario's Children by Family Income, 1986


Children in middle-income families (59.1%)
Children in higher-income families (24.8%)
Children dependent on social assistance (8.1%)
All other poor children (8.0%)
TOTAL CHILDREN – 2,294,000

Source: Ministry of Community and Social Services

Both the CFSA and the YOA are directing agencies to work with children within families or at least within community-based residences, rather than sending them outside their home communities for treatment, care, or custody. Thus, while fewer children are being taken into care by Children's Aid Societies, their needs have not lessened. Earlier efforts to plan permanently for children in long-term care are needed. Transitional age planning is also required for older children nearing the age where they will be living on their own.

Profile:

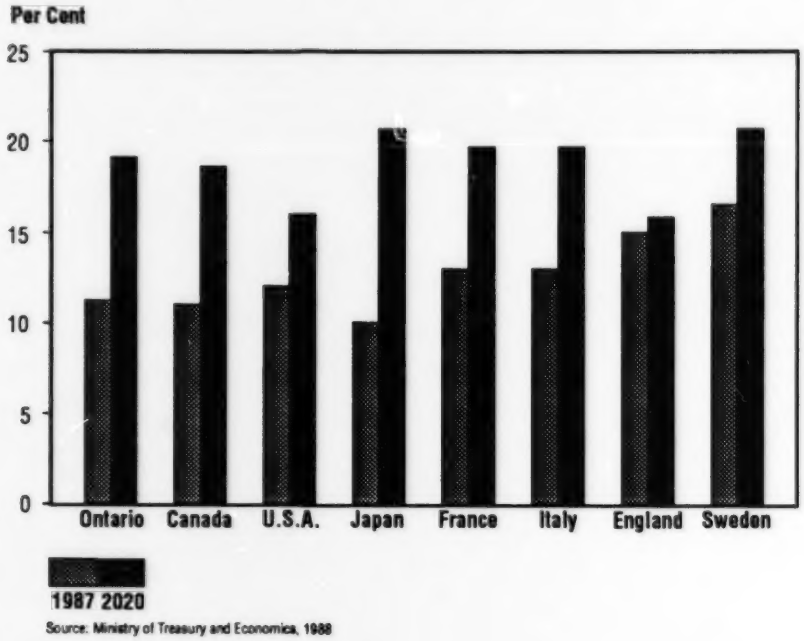
The Elderly Boom

The baby-boom generation (born 1946-66) is moving into middle age. Just as it filled Ontario's schools to overflowing in the 1960s and 1970s, this generation will test the ability of society to cope with a dramatic increase in the numbers of elderly in the population over the next 25 years, culminating in the launching of the "elderly boom" beginning in the year 2011. The "greying" of the population is well underway, bringing with it enormous opportunities and challenges for government, business, and the family.

TRENDS

Of the estimated 9.4 million people living in Ontario in 1988, over one million of them have passed their 65th birthday, and almost 40 per cent of those were 75 and older. Of those over 65, 77 per cent of men and 41 per cent of women are married. Altogether, 64 per cent of seniors own their own home, and most of the homes are mortgage free. Improved health care is helping people to live longer: average life expectancy for women is now 80.5 years and for men it is 73.7. Since 1931, the average male life expectancy rate in Ontario has increased by more than 12 years, and the average female life expectancy rate has soared by about 17 years. In the last decade alone, life expectancy for both sexes in Ontario has increased by three years. Ontarians can now expect to live almost one-third of their lives in active, healthy retirement. With over 11 per cent of Ontario's population now over 65, Ontario ranks slightly above the national average of 10.6 per cent.

Figure 9
Current and Projected Share of Population 65+ in Ontario, Canada, and Selected Countries



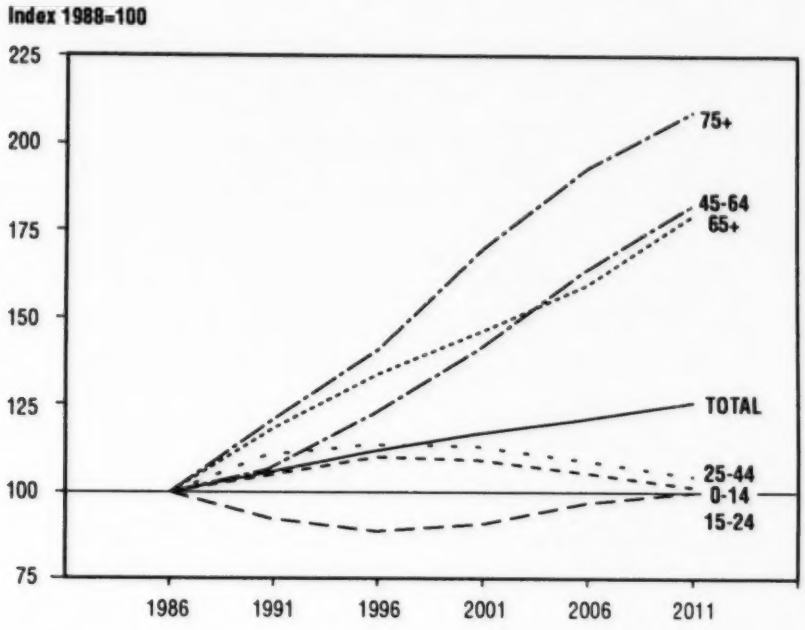
Source: Ministry of Treasury and Economics, 1988

By the year 2000, Ontario is expected to add about 1.5 million to its estimated 1988 population of 9.4 million to reach 10.9 million. The annual population growth rate will probably decline from the long-run average growth of 1.5 per cent to 1 per cent by 1996, dropping gradually thereafter to between 0.5 and 1 per cent. Nonetheless, in the 1988 – 2000 period, the ranks of those over 65 years will swell by about 400,000.

By 2011, the year in which the first wave of baby-boomers will become senior citizens, the over-75 age cohort will have more than doubled from its present level. In Ontario, people over 65 will make up about 16 per cent of the population and the median age will be about 40. By 2020, people over 65 years of age will account for almost 20 per cent of Ontario's population. Within this over-65 age group during the next 25 years, the number of those over 85 is projected to increase at the fastest rate, averaging about 4 per cent annually; those 75-84 will grow at a rate of 2.4 percent, and those 65-74 will increase by 1.9 per cent. In contrast, the average annual growth rate of those under 65 years is projected at about seven-eighths of a percentage point.

Alzheimer's disease is the leading cause of cognitive impairment in old age. More than 300,000 Canadians over the age of 65 are afflicted with this problem. Since our population is aging, this could mean that by the year 2020, some 700,000 Canadians could be potentially at risk. There is no known cure for Alzheimer's disease, which slowly destroys the intellectual functions of the brain.

Figure 10
Projected Ontario Population Growth by Age, 1988 - 2011



Source: Ministry of Treasury and Economics, 1988

IMPLICATIONS

Many elderly persons will require a variety of community-based health and social services to help them remain in their own homes as long as possible. The trend has already begun in Ontario to create more services for senior citizens in the community and to change the role of social service institutions. The major explosion in the number of seniors in the second decade of the next century, however, will challenge the province's capability to create a whole new social infrastructure for the elderly, with multiple options for an independent lifestyle.

While most elderly persons live independently, a number, particularly among the very old, do require some assistance. As the aging of the population continues, children of very elderly parents (over 80) will be in the elderly category themselves, and may be less able to take on the role of care-giver for their parents. Increasing labour-force participation of women will also affect the availability of traditional family support. Those families which do take on care-giving responsibilities will likely also need help from homemakers and other community support services.

Even with the expansion of home care and other community services for the elderly, the fact that more people are living longer could require a major growth in institutions such as homes for the aged, nursing homes, and chronic care facilities unless current utilization patterns change or new forms of care are developed. For instance, unless a cause and treatments are found, special types of care may have to be developed for victims of Alzheimer's disease, some of whom often wander from home and therefore require supervision. Conversely, a medical breakthrough in the next decade would dramatically reduce the need for specialized care.

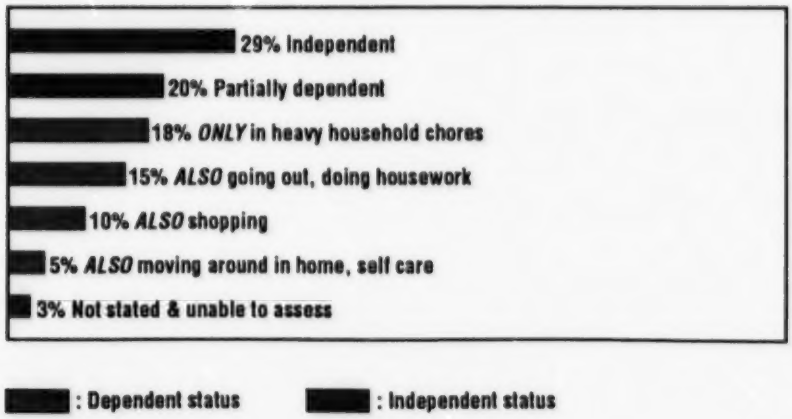
A frequently raised issue concerning the projected increase in the numbers of elderly in Canada is the continued ability of society to finance an equivalent range and level of services to that currently provided. The question of the "affordability" of an aging society is subject to a variety of factors: demographic developments; rate of increase in unit costs; dependency ratios; growth of private incomes of the elderly; and the general growth rate of the economy. Projections by Statistics Canada and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, however, seem to indicate that, barring significant changes from current trends, Canada should be able to afford the public costs of an aging society.

Profile:

Persons With Disabilities

Based on prevalence rates generated by the Canadian Health and Disability Survey in 1983 (CHDS), current estimates indicate that more than 983,000 adults (15 years and over) and 116,000 children (0-14) in Ontario have physical disabilities that result in some degree of functional loss which limits their ability to carry out routine activities. Over 40,000 of the adults depend on others for their basic personal care. The likelihood of disability increases dramatically with age; an estimated 60 per cent of Ontario's adult disabled population is 55 years of age or older. Estimates derived from data collected from the Ontario Child Health Survey (1986) place the number of disabled children in Ontario who need assistance with personal care, such as bathing, dressing, and grooming, at over 7,000.

Figure 11
Disabled Persons by Degree of Dependence in Ontario, 1983


29% Independent
20% Partially dependent
18% ONLY in heavy household chores
15% ALSO going out, doing housework
10% ALSO shopping
5% ALSO moving around in home, self care
3% Not stated & unable to assess
: Dependent status
: Independent status

Source: *Statistical Profile of Disabled Persons in Ontario, 1988*

TRENDS

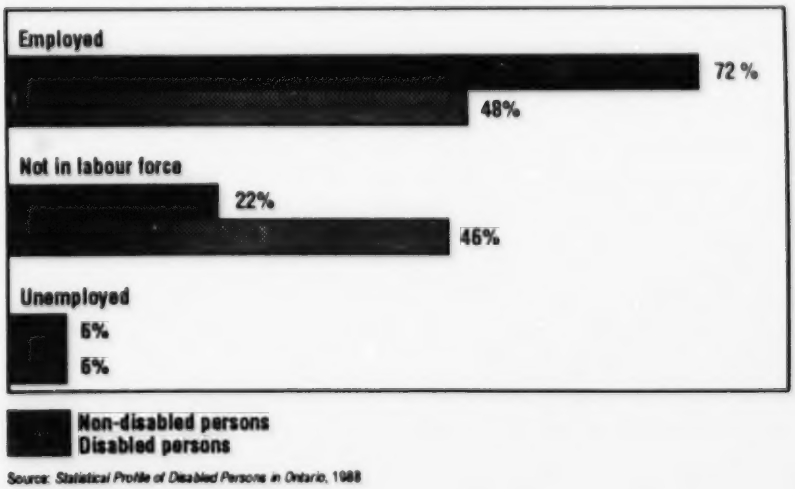
The major thrust of government planning for persons with developmental disabilities over the last decade in Ontario has been to provide support services in the community rather than care in institutions. The community service system for the developmentally handicapped which served 4,600 persons in 1975 is now providing varying degrees of support to over 25,000.

The number of people with disabilities is expected to increase. A conservative estimate shows that by 2006 Ontario will have 1.5 million disabled persons, an increase of about 36 per cent from the current level. This is due in large part to the aging of the population and longer life expectancies. In addition, modern medicine is saving the lives of many individuals who only a few years ago would have died from their injuries or illness. Victims of traumatic injuries are more likely to survive than in the past because of the success of specialized medical interventions such as emergency services, intensive care, and burn treatment units. There has been an improvement in the survival rate of babies born prematurely or with certain congenital defects, who may have some permanent impairment of function.

Modern technology is making it possible for many more of those with more serious disabilities to perform the tasks of everyday living on their own or with part-time support. New assistive devices and technological advances are being developed which enable persons with very limited physical capacities to communicate and to function more independently.

At the same time, recent amendments to both the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Ontario Human Rights Code have heightened consumer awareness of individual rights and expectations with regard to equality of access and opportunities. In response, there are rising demands for vocational and other training to enable individuals to support themselves and to hold jobs which recognize their abilities. In 1983, 72 per cent of Ontario's adult non-disabled population of working age were employed, but only 48 per cent of a similar disabled population held jobs.

Figure 12
Employment Status of Disabled and Non-Disabled Adults (15-64) in Ontario, 1983



Source: *Statistical Profile of Disabled Persons in Ontario, 1988*

IMPLICATIONS

In response to the trend to community living, a major challenge is to create a range of supported living arrangements and other community alternatives to institutional care. While many forms of community care may be less costly than institutional care in the long run, the transition puts pressure on resources with the start-up of new services and the phasing out of the old. As well, families who assume responsibility to care for a disabled family member at home, whether it is a child or an adult, will need supports that recognize the pressures on the whole family.

Persons who survive traumatic injury or debilitating illness, but who do not have a family home to which they can return, may require specialized accommodation, counselling, job retraining, and other services to facilitate their integration into community life. At the same time, the increased prevalence of chronic conditions, notably among premature infants and children, may increase demand for new models of service to address the needs of these groups. For all persons with disabilities, recent amendments to the Charter of Rights and amendments to the Human Rights Code related to "reasonable accommodation" may usher in an increasingly legalistic approach to resolving disputes.

The rising rate of employment for disabled persons is reducing the need for sheltered workshops. It will become increasingly important to communicate effectively with the private sector to ensure that employers are aware of the capabilities of disabled persons and to encourage businesses to hire individuals with disabilities. Moreover, increasing numbers of disabled workers may need support services in the workplace, such as attendant care and assistive or adaptive devices.

In order to encourage greater independence among disabled persons, vocational services and opportunities will be required for increasing numbers of people, including some persons now receiving family benefits who are classified as permanently unemployable. Disabled persons who are not able to work will require imaginative and enriching day programs, preferably in settings that do not segregate them from the mainstream population.

Profile:

Family Composition

The family is the basic support unit in our society. However, the traditional notion of "the family," with two parents, one income earner, and two or three children, no longer applies. The increased participation of women in the labour force, along with part-time work, declining fertility rates, and the lifestyle of the baby-boomers are but a few of the social and economic trends that have led to more varied family structures.

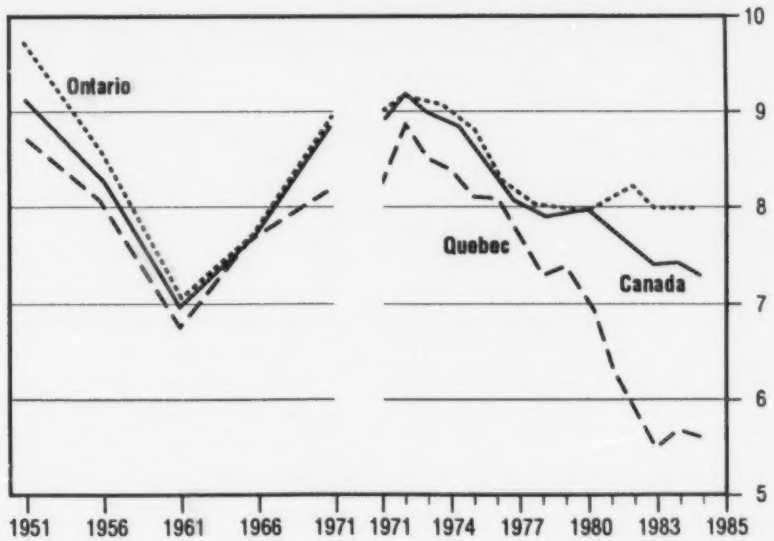
TRENDS

There are over 290,000 families in Ontario where one parent does not live with the child. The average number of children per family in Ontario at present is 1.3. And in Ontario, families with both parents working have soared from under 15 per cent in 1961 to over 50 per cent. Traditionally, dependent members of the family have been children; in future, it may be more common to have children looking after elderly parents.

Women are joining the labour force in unprecedented numbers. Close to 80 per cent of women in Ontario aged 20-44 are in the work force, and their numbers are likely to increase. By the turn of the century, women will make up almost half the Ontario labour force. The most dramatic increases in women's participation rates in the work force have come in the peak child-bearing years. In 1961, fewer than 35 per cent of women aged 25-34 were working outside the home; in 1987, more than three-quarters of them were. Among women with pre-school children, labour force participation rates have increased from just over 40 per cent in 1977 to over 60 per cent in 1987. Participation rates for women will continue to increase at about half the recent rate, culminating in an 80 per cent participant rate in 1996.

The marriage rate is declining and the divorce rate is rising. Over 60 per cent of the Ontario population aged 15 and over is married, but it was closer to 70 per cent 30 years ago. More than 30 per cent of Ontario marriages now end in divorce, and no-fault divorce laws may result in an even higher rate of marriage dissolution. The number of remarriages in Ontario has almost doubled since 1977, and almost a third of all marriages are now remarriages. The number of common-law unions is also increasing. Common-law couples make up only 6 per cent of husband-wife families in Ontario, but between 1981 and 1986 they have increased by 32 per cent while married couples increased by only 4.8 per cent. Half of common-law unions result in marriage.

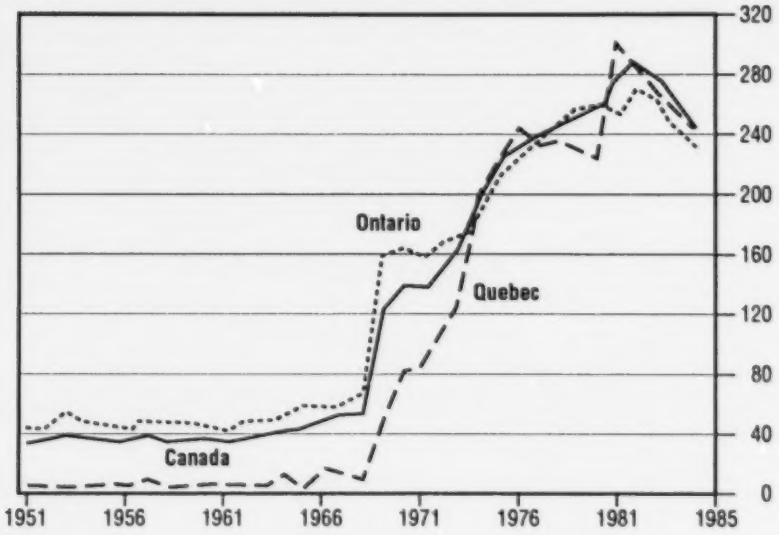
Figure 13
Crude Marriage Rate, per 1,000 Population, Ontario, Quebec, and Canada, 1951-85



Source: Statistics Canada, *Marriages and Divorces, Vital Statistics*, Volume II, 1985

The high rate of divorce and separation has spurred the fastest-growing "category" of family: the single-parent family. The number of such families almost tripled in the three decades between 1956 and 1986. During that period, the number of divorced or separated single parents grew by 400 per cent to 182,000, single parents who have never married rose from 1,000 to 30,000, and the number of widowed single parents stayed around 75,000. In 1986, 12 per cent of all families in Ontario were headed by single parents, of whom 85 per cent were women.

Figure 14
Crude Divorce Rate, per 1,000 Population, Ontario, Quebec, and Canada, 1951-85



Source: Statistics Canada, *Marriages and Divorces, Vital Statistics*, Volume II, 1985

The household without children has also become more common. In 1986, the number of husband-wife families with no children at home exceeded those with children under 18 years of age. Two-person families accounted for 40 per cent of families in 1986, compared to 33 per cent in 1971.

Moreover, the proportion of people living alone is also increasing, particularly in urban areas and among young adults and the elderly. In 1966, 9 per cent of people lived alone, but by 1986 the figure had increased to 14 per cent.

Family size has declined, largely due to the maturing of the baby-boomers. As young people reach their twenties, they leave their parents to establish their own households, usually made up of one or two persons. However, as they enter their thirties and begin to settle down, family size is expected to increase.

IMPLICATIONS

Marital disruption, resulting in reconstituted or single-parent families, creates stress for both children and parents. It can also affect the family's standard of living, particularly that of the wife and children. Family members often turn to social agencies for assistance in dealing with emotional problems and to government for assistance with financial problems.

The plight of the single-parent family has sparked debate about the adequacy of social benefits, the extent of parental versus state obligations for the care of children, and the need for employment supports to assist such families in achieving a greater degree of financial independence.

The family with two working parents requires a different approach to social services. Their situation will continue to keep child care on the public agenda, and they will probably require more flexible hours of service (evenings and weekends). Working families who are struggling to care for a disabled child or a frail elderly parent at home, and the increasing number of elderly living alone, may also raise the demand for more in-home support services.

Overall, the increased diversity in family types will continue to press both government and society as to the extent to which these different forms and lifestyles are acceptable to society. The question arises whether the state should favour a particular type of family in terms of its tax systems, laws and services.

Despite the apparent decrease in family stability, public polls indicate that Canadians are attaching increasing importance to the family, putting it ahead of career or religion in their lives. This would indicate that there will be more public concern with the family in the future.

Profile:

Family Violence

While not strictly speaking a demographic trend, the emergence of family violence into the public arena has had a dramatic impact on perceptions of the family. It is therefore best considered in the context of demographics.

Within the extended and nuclear family units, three major groups are commonly cited as being subject to abuse: the elderly, wives, and children. There is considerable controversy over its actual extent, as much abuse is unreported and there are diverse views on what constitutes abuse. However, there can be no doubt that elder, wife, and child abuse are critical issues within the family dynamic.

An estimated 1 million Canadian women may be battered each year. In 1985, 20,211 women sought shelter at 110 transition houses across Canada, and 15,730 of them had been physically or sexually abused. In 1987, 1,793 cases of child abuse were reported to the Child Abuse Register in Ontario, and 1,998 individuals were identified as potential abusers. Studies indicate that 2-4 per cent of elderly Canadians may be victims of abuse.

TRENDS

Victims of elder abuse are generally female, aged 75 and older, confused, physically dependent, and of low economic status. Often elderly persons are too frightened or frail to leave an abusive situation on their own. This situation is particularly difficult when the person is mentally incapacitated. As the number of elderly Canadians increases and community living is seen as the preferred alternative to institutionalization, more children may be responsible for providing care for elderly parents. Financial difficulties and the stresses associated with caring for an older person may make the parents targets for abuse.

Wife abuse occurs five times more often in families with incomes of less than $20,000 per year. Almost half of all incidents occur on weekends, and especially between couples who are breaking up. About 25 per cent of wife-abuse victims require medical treatment. The majority of abused women who seek shelter are between the ages of 21 and 34, and 70 per cent bring their children with them. At least two-thirds of these women would be living below the poverty line if they tried to support themselves after leaving their spouses.

According to a recent published Gallup poll, 15 per cent of Ontarians indicate that they are personally aware of a serious instance of physical child abuse by a parent in their neighbourhood. These figures may not reflect the actual number of child-abuse cases but may be the result of improved reporting techniques and greater public awareness. Children are often abused at an early age; some estimates indicate that 25 per cent of abuse occurs before the age of seven. Risk factors associated with child abuse include poverty, unemployment, alcoholism, being born with a handicap or chronic illness, family stress, living in a high-crime area, and inadequate housing.

As a result of the rising divorce rate and the increase in the number of single-parent families, more single persons will have the sole responsibility of caring for their children. Single parents may lack the support they require to meet their children's needs. This lack of support may lead to feelings of frustration, which may cause parents to abuse their children. In addition, the number of divorced parents remarrying is likely to increase. Children who live in step-families seem to be particularly vulnerable to abuse.

The reported incidence of child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, is rising as a result of greater public awareness and mandatory reporting by professionals in the field. The problem of runaway children and "street" children is becoming a greater concern. Many of these children leave home to escape abusive family situations, only to end up in a dangerous lifestyle involving drug abuse, prostitution, and violent crime. In Ontario, there has been a shift in the reported nature of child abuse over the past decade from physical to sexual. In 1987, there were 1,363 reported cases of sexual abuse, compared to 469 cases of physical abuse.

IMPLICATIONS

In recent years there has been a major change in public awareness and acknowledgement of family violence. While it is debatable whether or not the level of violence has increased, its recognition as a major social problem has certainly grown. This is likely to be reflected in a continuing development of services, both educative and corrective, designed to address this problem. The maturation of programs and services addressing family violence should, over time, lead to the development of more innovative approaches which minimize the further traumatization of the victims of violence.

Public recognition of family violence will increasingly focus attention on efforts to determine the contributing factors and to strengthen families in order to prevent such behaviour.

Section III: Cultural Diversity

Native People
Franco-Ontarians
New Ontarians

Profile:

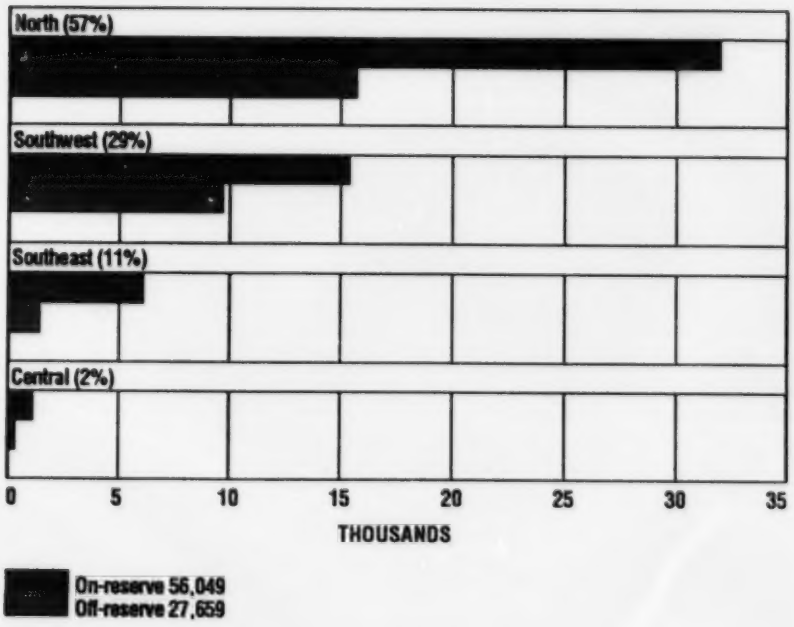
Native People

Ontario provides social services to Status Indians both on- and off-reserve. Certain services to Indians with reserve status (for example, general welfare, children's welfare) are cost shared by Ottawa under the Indian Welfare Agreement of 1965 at approximately 93 per cent of the province's costs, with Ontario contributing the remainder. Other services to Status Indians are cost shared in the same manner as for the general population.

TRENDS

The most complete recent data set on Ontario's aboriginal population, collected in 1981, indicates that there were approximately 110,000 persons of aboriginal origin in Ontario. Of that number, some 77,000 were Status Indians under the Federal Indian Act; 21,000 were Non-Status Indians, 11,000 were Métis, and fewer than 1,000 were Inuit. Since the proclamation of Bill C-31 in 1985, some 15,000 persons in Ontario (primarily Non-Status Indians) have been registered as Indians under the Indian Act. This would make the total Status Indian population today around 100,000. Métis representatives claim that they were inadequately reflected in the 1981 census and that there are many more Métis in Ontario than the census figures indicate.

Figure 15
Estimated Distribution of Indians, by Region in Ontario, 1986



Note: Percentages represent the estimated regional proportion of all Indians in Ontario, both on- and off- reserve

Source: Ministry of Community and Social Services Estimates, 1987

As a group, Ontario's Native population is disadvantaged when compared with others. Those who live in cities and off-reserve tend to be in a better situation than reserve residents, and, of all groups, reserve women are the worst off. Unemployment is high. Natives lag behind the rest of the population in terms of educational attainment, living conditions, employability, income, and life expectancy. About 42 per cent of Ontario's Native population lives in northern Ontario, many in remote fly-in communities far from social service agencies. In some communities, dependency on social assistance is high.

In 1985, the government of Ontario supported the concept of Native self-government both on- and off-reserve to be defined through tripartite negotiations. Delivery of services to the Native population through Native agencies is seen as a more effective way to provide those services and also as a visible expression of self-government. In recent years, three Indian agencies have been vested with the powers of Children's Aid Societies, and others are in the process of development. Under the Child and Family Services Act (1984), band representatives become parties to court protection proceedings involving band children. Most bands (some 100 out of 140) administer general welfare for their members under ministry supervision. Under the Child and Family Services Act referred to above, Indian child-welfare agencies now exist and more are envisaged. Despite the failure of the 1987 First Ministers' Conference, self-government remains a primary goal for Native political leaders. Ontario and Indian political organizations are committed pending a constitutional solution to negotiating the provision of social services within a self-government framework.

In the future, Native agencies may well play an even larger role in designing and delivering social services for Native people. There will also be more Native input into the operations of mainstream agencies. Both on- and off-reserve Native communities request that social services be delivered in a way that ensures the preservation of their heritage. Moreover, Native input into the work of the Social Assistance Review Committee and its report has raised expectations that Native involvement in the delivery of social assistance and services to adults will be formalized in legislation.

IMPLICATIONS

Present trends in the development of Native agencies for the delivery of social services are expected to continue. New legislation as well as amendments to existing laws are expected to provide a legislative basis that has hitherto been lacking in some areas. This legislation may well have implications for the special relationship Native people have with the federal government, as well as for federal-provincial financial responsibility for aboriginal people. With increased Native participation in service delivery, the matter of training workers will become more acute, particularly where provincial standards apply.

There will likely be interest in developing innovative ways for Native communities to take responsibility for the delivery of an increasingly broad gamut of social services. At the same time, federal responsibility for on-reserve communities in both constitutional and financial terms will continue to be an issue.

Demographics show that the proportion of Native elderly will continue to grow. The provision of services for older people will assume increasing importance.

Given the large numbers of Natives living in urban settings, the ministry will need to consider not only participation by off-reserve service agencies in service delivery, but also how to make mainstream agencies more responsive to Native needs. Employment equity should result in more Native staff working in the ministry's front-line and corporate positions. Mainstream agencies could also be recruiting more Native staff. Non-Native staff may require sensitivity training to help them relate to Native cultures.

Profile:

Franco-Ontarians

In 1986, the Ontario legislature adopted the French Language Services Act (FLSA) to provide an integrated and legislative approach to the delivery of government services to francophones. The FLSA designates certain parts of Ontario as areas in which provincial government services must be provided in French as well as in English. Municipal jurisdictions are not covered by the legislation.

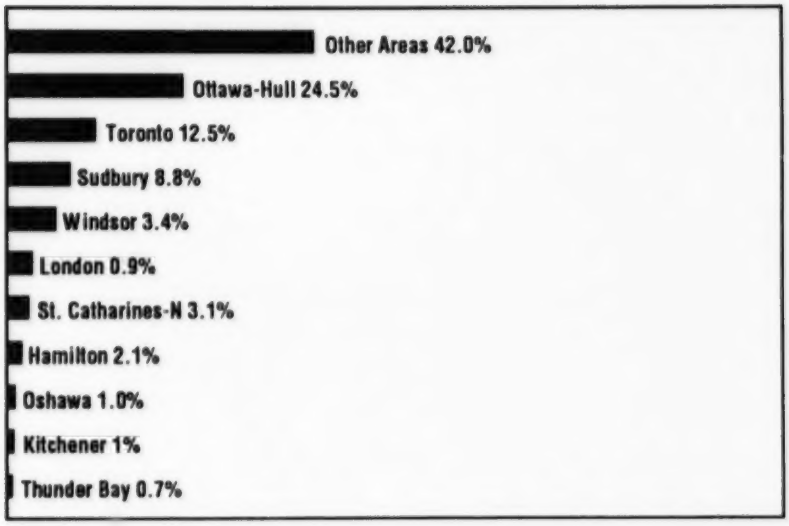
In compliance with the Act, the Ministry of Community and Social Services CCDDis expanding its translation services and hiring additional French-speaking staff, as well as identifying the most appropriate means of making French-language services available to francophones. The FLSA applies to the ministry head office, provincial agencies, boards and commissions, and ministry offices located in designated areas or serving these areas. The implementation deadline for the Act is November 1989, for all programs directly operated by the ministry. Programs delivered through transfer payment agencies will be individually designated according to specific criteria and are not subjected to the 1989 deadline.

TRENDS

Ontario is home to the largest Francophone minority in Canada. An estimated 924,000 Ontarians are bilingual; this number, combined with Franco-Ontarians who are unilingual, establishes a total of 985,000 French-speaking Ontarians, or 11.4 per cent of the population.

The relative regional concentration of Franco-Ontarians is important: they represent about 16 per cent of the population in eastern Ontario; almost 29 per cent in the northeast; just over 6 per cent in the northwest; less than 4 per cent in the southwest; and only 2-5 per cent of the population in central Ontario. While Franco-Ontarians reporting French as their mother tongue may not make up a large percentage of the total population of Ontario, they continue to represent significant proportions of the population of certain regions and communities.

Figure 16
Distribution of Ontario's Francophone Population by Census Metropolitan Areas, 1986



Source: Statistics Canada, 1986

Most Franco-Ontarians live in northern and eastern Ontario, two areas targeted for economic development initiatives by the provincial government. Unemployment rates among francophones tend to be higher than for non-francophones. In 1980 only 50 per cent of francophone men age 15 or over with less than a grade nine education were able to find full-time work. The majority of Franco-Ontarian men are blue-collar workers, such as loggers and miners, while women are concentrated in the service industries and in clerical occupations.

Illiteracy is a serious problem among Franco-Ontarians. It is estimated that 31.5 per cent of the active francophone population aged 24-65 is functionally illiterate. The illiteracy rate varies by region, ranging from about 25 per cent of francophones in eastern Ontario to 45 per cent in the northwest.

One out of three Franco-Ontarians will lose the ability to speak their first language over the course of their lives. Urbanization is a major factor of assimilation, and 77 per cent of Franco-Ontarians live in urban areas.

IMPLICATIONS

The new Act (FLSA) can be expected to raise awareness of language rights and to increase demand for services in French. Similarly, lobby groups will continue to ask that services developed for Franco-Ontarians are planned, managed, and delivered by francophones through francophone, as opposed to bilingual, agencies. In general, French-language social services will be needed most in northeastern and eastern Ontario, although demand will vary from community to community within regions.

Basic literacy and skills training must be available in French, particularly for workers who may be displaced from jobs in single-industry resource towns in the north. At the same time, special measures may be required to recruit the necessary French-speaking social-work professionals and other staff to fulfil requirements of the FLSA, especially in remote areas of northern Ontario.

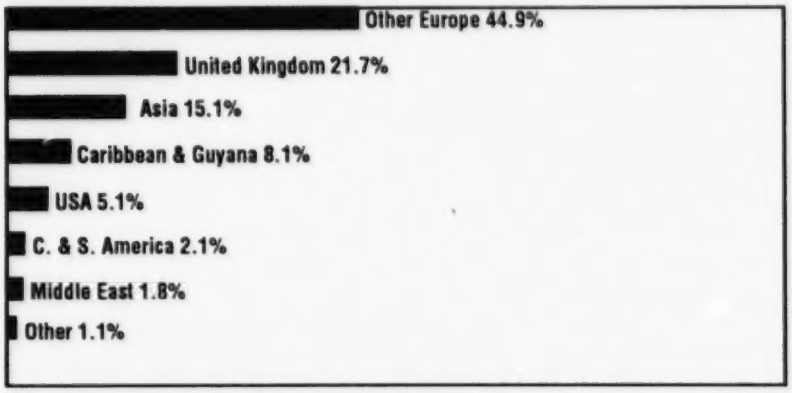
Profile:

New Ontarians

Ontario is already a multicultural/multiracial society and all indications are that it will become even more so in the years ahead. According to the 1986 census, almost 25 per cent of Ontario's population was born outside of Canada, compared to the national average of 16 per cent.

In 1987, almost 85,000 new immigrants arrived in the province. Ontario receives about 50 per cent of all the immigrants who come to Canada, and half of these newcomers settle in Metropolitan Toronto. In 1986, 30 per cent of Ontario's population declared an ethnic origin other than English or French. About 1.35 million persons reported a mother tongue other than English or French, and it is estimated that 150,000 of these people do not speak either of the official languages. About 50 per cent of immigrants do not speak either English or French on arrival.

Figure 17
Distribution of Ontario's Population Born Outside Canada, 1986



Source: 1986 Census, Statistics Canada

TRENDS

Ontario's population is still growing, mainly because of a continuing influx of immigrants both from within and outside Canada and the sheer numbers of baby-boom women of child-bearing age in the present population (a phenomenon known as the baby-boom "echo" effect). On the whole, though, the rate of population growth is slowing down, and the population is becoming static. The fertility rate in Ontario has decreased from 2.3 in 1971 to 1.68 in 1986. In order for Canada to sustain a "stable" population of 25 million people, given the current fertility rate, 25 per cent of the population would need to be made up from immigration.

The proportion of immigrants who do not have English or French as their mother tongue has been increasing for several decades, reflecting the shift in immigrants' country of origin from the British Isles to other parts of the world. Immigration patterns to Ontario have changed in the last 20 years. In 1967, close to 80 per cent of immigrants were from Europe; by 1987 this group represented less than 30 per cent of all immigrants. Currently, immigrants are increasingly from Asia (40 per cent) and from South and Central America (20 per cent).

Annual international immigration to Ontario is expected to remain around the 80,000 level into the early 1990s. Immigrants will continue to be mainly from Asia, Africa, and South and Central America, and these visible minorities will further reinforce the changes that are occurring in the racial, cultural, and religious composition of the population of the province.

It is expected that the majority of new immigrants will continue to locate in urban centres, particularly in Metropolitan Toronto and surrounding communities. This influx will create further demand for already scarce affordable housing.

The large immigration movements of 20 years ago are now reflected in an aging ethnic population that never had the opportunity for language training, but that now needs social and health services. As Ontario moves towards becoming a "rights-oriented" society, there will be pressure to make these services more accessible by reducing language or cultural barriers.

IMPLICATIONS

Unless there is a significant change in Canadian immigration policy, Ontario will not experience the kind of generational renewal that has come to be expected. The population will become more static. However, any significant increase in immigration (50,000) would delay the advent of population decline by eight years, and improve dependency ratios.

In adjusting to their new society, immigrants need access to social services in their community. However, cultural and linguistic barriers may hinder their ability to use these services, and some individuals may be unaware of their existence or reluctant to approach agencies for help. Demonstration projects such as the Bridging Initiative will address some of these issues but will also raise expectations among ethno-cultural groups. These new constituencies will expect that mainstream services will become more accessible to them or that alternative services will be developed. There are also cost implications in the development of culturally sensitive and responsive services. It is likely that there will be an increasing demand for interpreter services, as well as for cross-cultural race relations training of staffs and future professionals in the human services fields.

The Ontario public service and the boards of directors and staff of social agencies funded by the ministry will, in future, have to reflect the multicultural/multiracial society in terms of hiring, appointing, and training of staff and volunteers.

Section IV: Role of Government and Service Delivery

Federal-Provincial Relationships
Devolvement
Diversity and Consumerism

Profile:

Federal-Provincial Relationships

In Canada, debate over the role of government in the area of social services has mostly been a matter of degree. In the United States, there seems to be a backlash against the welfare state, fuelled by the neo-conservative demand for "less" government and evidenced by the success of tax revolts in some states. In Britain and other industrial countries, privatization has become a watchword.

Canada has taken a more moderate approach. Canadians are generally in favour of a more comprehensive health and social network, and opinion polls continue to show support for a society which provides for the disadvantaged through tax dollars. There are no apparent signs of any large-scale withdrawal of the public sector from the field of social policy. That is not to say, however, that the role of government remains static.

TRENDS

The Meech Lake Constitutional Accord seems to point to a longer-term trend in which more powers and responsibilities (particularly financial) in social policy will devolve from the federal to the provincial governments. In the shorter term, however, Ottawa is intervening further in some areas of social policy, such as in the proposed $4 billion federal child-care program.

The federal government has mused about tampering with the universality of some social programs, such as family allowances, but it retreated in the face of public opposition. It also retracted a plan to partially de-index pensions for the elderly. However, public opinion polls indicate that the debate is likely to continue over whether or not to modify universal programs so as target them more to the most needy.

The Ontario government has continued to play a role in economic and social policy. To a degree it has resisted the trend set by provinces to subordinate social policy to economic policy. It has viewed both areas as important and has actively intervened where appropriate, as, for example, with pay equity in the private sector which is intended to redress systemic economic unfairness to women workers.

The negotiation of a Free Trade Agreement with the United States is often placed in the context of a general trend to a more laissez-faire, non-interventionalist attitude to the economy, at least on the part of the federal government. There is concern that ratification of the agreement will foster "Americanization" of the Canadian economic and social system, and that some social services may come under attack from the United States.

IMPLICATIONS

The role of the federal and provincial governments in social programs is likely to fluctuate, depending on federal budget priorities and the political and economic climate. This uncertainty could have an impact on the ability of provincial ministries to plan for the future. At the same time the overlap between federal and provincial social and economic policies and programs, makes co-operation and co-ordination by all levels of government increasingly important.

The federal deficit may result in Ottawa seeking to set limits to universal programs such as Old Age Security as the aging of the population places increasing pressure on federal expenditures. Despite the fact that provincial governments will also see their own health and social services costs for the elderly rise, Ottawa may endeavour to restrain transfers to the provinces for social services.

In order to rationalize its own programs and improve their effectiveness, the province, through the Ministry of Community and Social Services, may seek more actively to influence the content or direction of proposed federal initiatives by ensuring that the province's social agenda is considered. If the province also becomes more involved in federal issues such as immigration policy, MCSS may have a role to play in shaping provincial policies.

When the Free Trade Agreement is fully implemented, it will have a wide-ranging economic impact in Ontario. Most forecasters predict an economy in which fiercer competition may produce job opportunities, yet certain industries may fail, thereby putting people out of work and placing increased pressures on social services. While there is no consensus on the impact of the agreement on social services, there is concern among some policy experts that social policies may be adversely affected.

Profile:

Devolvement

The relationships in the social services area between provincial and municipal governments and between governments and the voluntary sector have been formed over many decades. The system encompasses a wide variety of programs and delivery agents; it operates under a number of provincial statutes and a variety of cost-sharing arrangements involving federal, provincial, and municipal governments. This complex, interrelated system is being re-evaluated by independent review committees such as the Provincial Municipal Social Services Review (PMSSR) and the Social Assistance Review Committee (SARC), and by internal ministry groups such as the Agency Relations and Accountability Project (ARAP).

Because of its legislative role, the province retains overall responsibility for the social services system. Municipal governments and voluntary bodies at the regional and local level participate in planning, delivery, and funding of a number of programs, with considerable variation existing in the level and kinds of services offered from community to community.

TRENDS

There is a definite trend in Ontario to move more planning and management responsibility to the local or community level. This decentralization should facilitate the development of programs particularly suited to the needs of individual communities and also allow for greater local innovation. The move to a community focus is occurring as the province moves away from a direct-delivery role to an "enabling" role in the social services system. However, as reviews like SARC have pointed out, there is no comprehensive system in place to guide the community planning process across Ontario. The province funds a number of local and regional advisory groups which contribute to service planning, but their roles and influence vary. Some, but not all, municipalities are involved in planning for social services in their areas.

This devolution to the community coincides with a move by institutionally based clients and staff to community-based residences and services. For instance, the multi-year plan for the developmentally handicapped calls for the creation of a comprehensive community system of group homes, supported living arrangements, and other support services.

At the same time as it is considering greater community participation in planning and delivery, the province is sharpening its management role to ensure both consistency of service and accountability for resources and results.

IMPLICATIONS

The challenge will be to have a system which allows for local flexibility in planning and delivery but which reduces inequalities in services across Ontario and ensures accountability of the system. The province may become more involved in setting minimum standards for services, in developing joint planning mechanisms with local governments and voluntary organizations, and in monitoring the effectiveness of delivery from community to community.

Continuing consultation, planning, and priority-setting by the ministry, local governments, community agencies, and client groups will be necessary. Different communities may develop different models for community planning and co-ordination, involving all the partners in the social services system. Agencies may have to refocus priorities as needs change so that every program is not an "add-on" to existing services but is part of an overall community planning effort.

As fewer individuals are housed in institutions, the system will need to become even more focused on maintaining people in their communities. This will pose yet another challenge to community planning mechanisms to include an even wider range of services to meet client needs.

Profile:

Diversity and Consumerism

Governments at all levels are faced with demands from well-organized, well-informed interest groups representing a wide diversity of needs. Moreover, an increasingly pluralistic population has meant continued pressure to develop specialized services geared to the particular needs of individuals and/or specific target groups.

For Ontario, this has meant the funding of around 2000 social agencies and an almost equal number of child care centres by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. In addition, social programs are offered by allied ministries as well as the voluntary sector. Social services do not exist in isolation: they are part of an environment that incudes employment programs, health care, housing assistance, and other programs and services.

TRENDS

Over the past decade or so there has been a virtual revolution in social expectations as to the range and type of social services that are deemed necessary to support individuals and families. These expectations have not only broadened the range of services available, but have led to a dramatic increase in overall social expenditures. As a result, there has been a significant increase in public expenditures. In MCSS alone, the budget has risen from $1.5 billion in 1980-81 to $4.3 billion for the 1988-89 fiscal year.

As the population has become more educated and articulate, and has put more emphasis on individual rights, there has been a tendency for users of services to regard themselves as "consumers" or "customers" rather than "clients." As such, the user feels more justified in making demands as to the quality, sufficiency, and accessibility of the services provided.

The "target" group focus of most government programs and the success of some groups in lobbying for services have led to an increasing proliferation of interest groups based on such factors as type of disability, ethnicity, age, and sex. Each group focuses its demands on particular services rather than on common needs. The very success of such lobbying has resulted in growing confusion, particularly in urban areas, as to how best to provide needed services, given the multitude of agencies each providing its own particular specialized function.

IMPLICATIONS

The revolution in consumer demand and the resultant growth of social and human services have strained provincial budgets. There will likely be some rethinking of how the service system is financed, how needs are prioritized, and whether dollars spent are achieving clear objectives in the most cost-effective manner.

The increasing emphasis on the "rights" of those who use social services will create pressure for programs to be more adaptable and more tailored to individual needs. There may also be demands for programs designed to maintain and foster the independence of those who use services, and for more innovative approaches to self-help.

The proliferation of specialized services, particularly in urban centres, will likely result in increased efforts to co-ordinate planning and delivery at the local level. More emphasis is likely in the area of improved access and in the provision of "generic" services such as transportation and home supports. Similarly, efforts will continue to improve interministerial co-ordination and the rationalization of program responsibilities among ministries.

Section V: Other Selected Trends

Rights Orientation
Technology
Human Resources and the World of Work

Profile:

Rights Orientation

The proclamation in 1982 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms marked a significant benchmark in the protection and perception of human rights in Canada. Indeed, it has been called a revolution in civil liberties. In contrast to the United States, the legal entrenchment of rights is a relatively new phenomenon in Canada.

The Charter affirmed such basic human rights as life, liberty, and security of the person, and guaranteed every individual equality before and under the law. It also provided specific protection to certain groups in society. The Charter made Canada one of the few countries in the world to guarantee constitutionally the equality of those with mental or physical disabilities.

TRENDS

After the Constitution was enacted in 1982, Ontario and other provinces took steps to bring provincial laws and practices into conformity with the new constitutional order. In addition, during the 1980s, Ontario enacted a number of laws designed to legislate fair treatment for certain groups, including women in the workplace (Pay Equity) and Franco-Ontarians (French Language Services Act). The Freedom of Information and Protection to Privacy Act addressed the issue of the public's "right to know" and of an individual's right to have personal information gathered by government kept confidential.

The scope of the Ontario Human Rights Code, which provides protection from discrimination, was extended to provide further protection for the rights of the disabled and to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. A new focus on the rights of children and families was enshrined in 1984 in the Child and Family Services Act. One of the principal tenets of the CFSA is the delivery of culturally appropriate services. In relation to Native communities, for example, the CFSA provides for the establishment of Native-run child and family service authorities.

The number of advocacy groups formed in recent years indicates that Ontarians are more willing than ever before to organize in order to demand what they feel are their rights and to lobby governments to get the services to which they feel they are entitled. The ability to raise issues in front of tribunals or the courts has also provided the opportunity for individuals or groups to receive greater media attention and a public airing of their grievances.

While Canadians may never become as litigious as Americans, an increase in the volume of formal complaints and legal proceedings based on alleged violation of rights can be anticipated. The courts have ruled that decisions by government bodies must be based on clear, legislative criteria, not vague regulatory standards. There has been a steady increase in Charter challenges against discretionary actions taken by government officials, boards, and agencies, as well as against social services legislation and practices.

With respect to vulnerable populations, such as the dependent elderly and disabled persons, a number of social justice issues are still emerging. Increasingly, measures to protect vulnerable groups are legislated and include enforcement mechanisms, as, for example, the Office of the Ombudsman. Similarly, issues related to consent to treatment, affirmative action, and the right to live in the community are more and more being raised by advocacy groups.

IMPLICATIONS

The repercussions of much of the "rights" legislation developed in this decade are really just beginning to be felt. It seems very likely that they will have a major impact on social services, requiring in some instances a redefinition of who is eligible for services, and in other instances a rethinking of the design of the service.

New requirements concerning such issues as pay equity and cultural and language provisions will increasingly affect staffing practices. Many agencies will be forced to review how effective they are in serving the total community.

There is a significant risk associated with the increasingly legislative approach to individual rights and fair treatment of all persons in society. The appropriate discretion and flexibility will be lost if "fair" is equated with "identical".

Profile:

Technology

Many of the changes in our society in recent times have been driven by the development of new technologies. Technology has influenced all facets of our life. As the rate of technological developments has accelerated, so too has the rate of change in our lifestyles, work, and attitudes.

TRENDS

In the area of employment, technology is a major determinant of the nature of the work environment and of job creation and job loss. An OECD study suggests that manufacturing will continue to lose jobs, as will some retail areas such as banking and certain distribution services. In contrast, service industries and personal and social services will gain positions. Professional, scientific, technical, and service placements will increase, but blue-collar, unskilled, and clerical jobs will decrease.

In the medical area, the discovery of new drugs, new approaches in genetic coding and manipulation, new surgical and rehabilitative procedures, and new adaptive devices has continued to accelerate. These innovations have resulted in the ability to prevent, correct, and/or cure a vast array of disabilities and diseases that just decades ago were considered untreatable. At the same time, the implementation of new technologies increasingly poses certain legal, moral, and ethical questions about the rights of individuals. Potentially controversial technologies may infringe on the personal freedom of individuals, or there may be questions about who should be entitled to the benefit of technological innovations.

In the social area, breakthroughs increasingly promise new opportunities for independence for the blind, the deaf, the handicapped, and the elderly. While slower to develop than technological applications elsewhere, these developments have increased to the point where the ministry has formed a program technology branch to research and identify new technologies and to ensure Ministry programs make the best possible use of technology to encourage independence. Examples of some new technologies being monitored include implants to provide hearing to totally deaf people, implantable visual-system prostheses, computer-training programs for the developmentally handicapped, and safe houses for the infirm elderly. Such innovative approaches will increase in the future.

IMPLICATIONS

Developments in employment-related technologies will have their major impact not on the total number of jobs but on the types of skills in demand. Many of the new jobs created will not be available to those who lose old jobs, since they lack the necessary education and skills. Increasingly, employment and retraining programs will need to focus on teaching generic skills and on "retooling" workers throughout their working life.

Medical advances will continue to save lives which would otherwise be lost, thereby extending the number of handicapped people who require personal and other services over a longer life span and creating new categories of needs, such as for the brain-damaged. Ethical considerations in areas such as genetic engineering, surrogate motherhood, rationing of high-cost technology, and intrusive security procedures will increasingly come to the fore, demanding some stance by this ministry in terms of legislative approval, funding, and application.

Technologies, new and old, when part of the services delivered to elderly persons and to physically and developmentally handicapped individuals, have the potential not only to maintain and enhance the quality of that service but also to limit delivery costs. The growth in prostheses, security devices, and other technologies will extend the ability to care for many at home or in the community who previously would have been treated in a hospital or institution. This outreach will further heighten demands for community support services.

Profile:

Human Resources and the World of Work

The life blood of any organization is the people who work in it. This is no less true for the Ministry of Community and Social Services, or for the social service agencies in Ontario, than it is for any other organization. Diverse social forces continue to transform the working world and to change its character.

TRENDS

In common with most organizations, MCSS and most social agencies have found themselves coping with a work force encompassing three generations of workers, each with distinct attitudes and preferences as to what constitutes an appropriate work environment: workers born before World War II, the baby-boom generation, and younger generations now entering the work force. By and large the older generation is accustomed to a hierarchical environment, the baby-boomers prefer a participative style, and the new generation of workers favours greater autonomy and independence.

While women have generally found employment opportunities in the social service sector, their increased movement into management positions has had an effect on the attitudes of organizations for which they work. There is a greater sensitivity to family-related issues such as dependent care and the need for more flexible practices to allow a better fit between workplace demands and family needs.

The aging of the work force, combined with the current prevalence of middle-aged persons in middle and upper management positions, has resulted in the phenomenon known as career plateauing for many individuals. Accompanying this trend has been a widespread tendency among organizations to flatten their hierarchical structure by reducing the number of middle-management positions. These trends have created pressures on organizations to develop new ways of motivating and challenging staff who otherwise might feel their career had reached a dead end.

The ministry and various allied agencies face the challenge of implementing employment equity through the hiring and promotion of more racial minorities, women, Native people, francophones, and disabled persons as well as by recruiting new, younger staff. This transformation must be accomplished through staff changes, not increases.

In today's volatile environment marked by rapid external, social and economic change, staff and management must deal with heightened public expectations as to the availability of services and with changing demands as to the manner in which they are delivered. At the same time they must cope with a tightening fiscal environment. This combination is creating unprecedented demands on personnel, who perceive that work loads are expanding, that traditional practices are increasingly challenged, and that organizational objectives are becoming steadily more complex to establish.

IMPLICATIONS

Social service and other organizations are challenged to respond to the shift in the composition of the work force by adopting policies and practices that allow greater autonomy and flexibility to staff while at the same time ensuring that organizational efficiency and effectiveness are maintained. The organizations that will continue to attract and maintain a talented work force will be those that allow staff to exercise judgement and whose policies permit such practices as job-sharing, flex-time, job rotation, and secondments.

Strategic planning can position an organization to cope with change in ways that maintain morale and avoid needless disruption. Such planning would involve a shift from traditional control-oriented management to one emphasizing leadership and one where the staff felt that they shared in the creation of that vision.

Conclusions

The words "revolution" or "boom" are strong words, yet increasingly they are being used by commentators to describe the trends and changes which influence us both individually and collectively. We are experiencing the repercussions of a "technological revolution," a "revolution of social expectations," an "economic revolution," a "management revolution," an "elderly boom," an "urban boom," and, of course, the "baby boom." These forces are interrelated in a complex web, the unravelling of which poses a difficult yet important exercise for those who plan and deliver services.

Rapid change can create uncertainty and confusion, but it can also provide opportunities and improvements both for society and the individual. For the ministry and its affiliates, the challenge is to arrange programs and structures in ways that recognize and adapt to the complex and dynamic environment in which they exist. The most critical requisite is an active leadership able to identify the major trends that will influence the provision of social services and to adjust policies and objectives as opportunities arise. There should be the satisfaction of knowing that changes are being handled in an appropriate and co-ordinated manner.

Despite its selective scope and coverage of the topics presented, the ministry regards this document as an important part of its strategic planning process. Indeed, it is more "strategic" in process than in content, since it summarizes the results of a collaborative planning venture among the most valued of strategic planning resources: our staff, our affiliated agencies, and our clientele.

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Figure 18
Select Social Indicators, Ontario, 1976-86

	Ontario	Hamilton	Kitchener	London	Oshawa	Ottawa-Hull	St. Catharines-Niagara	Sudbury	Thunder Bay	Toronto	Windsor
Population April 1, 1986 (000s)	9101	557	311	342	204	819	343	149	122	3427	254
Population June 1, 1976	8264	529	272	276	135	693	302	157	119	2803	248
Population change 1976-86 (%)	10.1	5.3	14.3	26.7	51.1	18.2	13.6	-5.7	2.5	22.3	2.4
Population ages 0-14 1986 (%)	20.5	19.8	21.9	20.1	22.8	19.8	19.5	22.3	20.4	19.5	20.7
Population ages 65+ 1986 (%)	10.9	11.5	9.7	11.4	8.3	8.9	13.3	13.1	11.8	9.6	11.7
Median age 1986	32.3	33.3	30.9	32.2	30.8	31.2	34.3	31.5	32.4	32.4	32.3
Median age 1976	28.6	29.1	27.0	28.2	27.4	27.4	29.3	25.0	28.4	29.4	28.4
Births per 1000 population 1986	14.7	14.0	15.5	14.4	15.6	14.5	13.1	12.2	13.7	15.2	13.6
Births per 1000 population 1976	14.8	13.8	16.5	14.4	16.0	14.2	12.9	17.3	14.3	14.7	15.4
Total fertility rate (births per woman) 1986	1.69	1.66	1.71	1.56	1.76	1.49	1.65	1.45	1.59	1.63	1.61
Total fertility rate (births per woman) 1976	1.77	1.68	1.80	1.57	1.82	1.49	1.65	2.00	1.76	1.66	1.89
Births to adolescents 1986 (%)	5.2	4.6	6.0	4.9	5.4	4.2	6.2	8.3	6.1	3.8	7.2
Births to adolescents 1976 (%)	10.9	10.3	11.9	10.3	10.4	8.7	10.8	12.5	13.5	8.1	13.1
Foreign born 1986 (%)	22.9	24.1	20.7	18.2	17.2	13.4	20.4	10.0	15.2	36.0	20.0
Native peoples 1986 (%)	1.8	1.4	1.0	1.4	1.5	1.7	1.6	3.0	3.9	1.0	1.9
French mother tongue 1986 (%)	6.0	2.0	1.8	1.5	2.6	37.0	4.8	32.2	3.1	2.0	7.3
Completed secondary school ages 15+ 1986 (%)	56.9	55.7	55.1	60.8	54.7	66.7	52.3	52.1	54.7	60.3	54.6
Unemployment rate, men 1986	5.9	6.0	4.8	6.4	4.1	7.1	7.6	11.7	10.3	4.8	8.2
Unemployment rate, women 1986	8.0	8.4	7.5	7.8	9.4	8.4	10.8	13.0	9.5	6.4	11.3
Median private household income, 1985 (000s)	33.0	32.9	32.1	30.0	38.0	36.4	30.0	30.1	33.4	36.9	32.3

Source: Statistics Canada Publications Series 82, 84, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95